

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

8

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment is proper because it narrows the issues on appeal and does not require further search by the Examiner.

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 6 and 11 have been amended to further define the invention.

Applicant submits that the claims have been amended to merely clarify the subject matter of the claims and in no way narrow the scope of the claims in order to overcome the prior art or for any other statutory purpose of patentability.

Notwithstanding any claim amendments of the present Amendment or those amendments that may be made later during prosecution, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,781,773 to Vanderpool et al. (hereinafter, Vanderpool) in view of Sheffield (U.S. Pat. No. 5,832,481). Claims 11-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vanderpool and Sheffield, and further in view of Blinn et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,897,622).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention, as defined in claim 1 (and similarly in claim 6), is directed to an apparatus for controlling display of database search items.

Importantly, the apparatus includes a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on a search page by inputting at least one of change-targeted-item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table, data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search-item name to the item-name table, display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table, and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table.

Conventionally, a database is created by designing tables constructed within the database and configuring a scheme that is in line with a specific task. Importantly, since

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

9

changes or additions to the names of the **search items** (e.g., **search criteria**) in a database involve changing the database per se, this is inevitably carried out by an expert having thorough knowledge of databases. That is, a user who is not accustomed to handling databases will find difficulty in changing or adding to the names of **search items** (e.g., **search criteria**) (Application at page 1, lines 12-27).

The claimed invention, on the other hand, includes a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on the search page by inputting at least one of change-targeted-item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table, data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search-item name to the item-name table, display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table, and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table (Application at Figure 1; page 13, line 6-page 19, line 23). These novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to easily make **changes or additions to the search items on a search page** (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

II. THE ALLEGED PRIOR ART REFERENCES

A. Vanderpool and Sheffield

The Examiner alleges that Vanderpool would have been combined with Sheffield to form the invention of claims 1-10 and 19. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Vanderpool discloses a database generation process 30, in which a text record merge file 84 and a listing number file 86 are applied to a database builder program 34 (col. 6, lines 33-36). In addition, various user defined inputs 32 are provided to the database builder 43 (col. 6, lines 36-37). Such user defined inputs may include: lists of the fields of the various commonly formatted data which the database builder is to index in table form; lists of fields to be used as summary data; and the data to be used as tax data (col. 6, lines 37-41).

Sheffield discloses a database interface and an interface customization tool for customizing a display of database contents (i.e., not for changing search items (e.g., search criteria) on a search page) (Sheffield at col. 2, lines 1-5).

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

10

However, Applicant respectfully submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, these references are completely unrelated, and no person of ordinary skill in the art would have considered combining these disparate references, absent impermissible hindsight.

In fact, Applicant submits that the Examiner can point to no motivation or suggestion in the references to urge the combination as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, neither of these references teach or suggest their combination.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been so motivated to combine the references as alleged by the Examiner. Therefore, the Examiner has failed to make a prima facie case of obviousness.

Moreover, Applicant submits that neither Vanderpool, nor Sheffield, nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests *"a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on a search page by inputting at least one of: change-targeted item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table; data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search-item name to the item-name table; display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table; and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table"*, as recited, for example, in claim 1.

As noted above, unlike conventional apparatuses with which a user who is not accustomed to handling databases will find difficulty in changing or adding to the names of **search items (e.g., search criteria)**, the claimed invention includes a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on the search page (Application at Figure 1; page 13, line 6-page 19, line 23). These novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to easily make **changes or additions to the search items on a search page** (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

Clearly, these features are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Indeed, the Examiner concedes that these features are not taught or suggested by Vanderpool but attempts to allege that the features are suggested by Sheffield. The Examiner is clearly incorrect.

Indeed, Applicant would point out that the Examiner merely alleges that "Sheffield discloses a method of editing items in tables of a database" (Office Action at page 3).

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

11

However, as Applicant pointed out in the Amendment filed herein on January 10, 2005, the claimed invention is not merely directed to "editing items in tables of a database".

Indeed, as noted above, an object of the claimed invention is to allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to easily make **changes or additions to the search items on a search page**. One feature which helps to attain this object is a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on the search page (Application at Figure 1; page 13, line 6-page 19, line 23).

However, the Examiner has never acknowledged that this feature is included in the claimed invention. Instead, the Examiner merely identifies portions of alleged references which pertain to editing data in a database. **Applicant would point out that changing search items (e.g., search criteria) displayed on a search page is completed different from changing data in a database.**

Indeed, nowhere does Sheffield teach or suggest changing search items displayed on a search page. Instead, as pointed out by the Examiner, Sheffield merely discloses changing data in a database or the manner in which data is displayed (e.g., see Sheffield at col. 23, lines 5-9).

Indeed, assuming (arguendo) that Figure 1 in Sheffield may be considered a "search page" for searching a database, and assuming (arguendo) that "Employee ID" could somehow be considered a "search item", nowhere does Sheffield teach or suggest that "Employee ID" could be changed, for example, to "Employee Hair Color" or "Employee's Favorite Dessert". Indeed, Applicant submits that **regardless of how the user in Sheffield prefers to edit the data in the database, the page illustrated in Figure 1 will always be the same**. Indeed, nowhere does Sheffield teach or suggest anything even remotely related to changing a search item on a search page.

Again, as Applicant pointed out in the January 10, 2005 Amendment, Figure 7 in the present application illustrates a search page which includes the search items "PRODUCT CATEGORY", "PRODUCT NAME", etc. The claimed invention allows a user (e.g., a non-expert user) to easily change, add to, or delete from, **the search items (e.g., search criteria) on the search page**. Thus, for example, a user may use the claimed invention to change the search items displayed on the search page, as illustrated in Figure 8. That is, the user may use

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

12

the claimed invention to easily replace the search item "PRODUCT CATEGORY" with the search item "PRODUCT CLASS". Nowhere are these novel features taught or suggested by the cited references.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

B. Blinn

The Examiner alleges that Vanderpool would have been combined with Sheffield, and that the alleged Vanderpool/Sheffield combination would have been further combined with Blinn to form the invention of claims 11-18. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Blinn discloses an electronic shopping and merchandising system which is intended to provide a capability to generate product information pages dynamically during order processing (Blinn at col. 3, lines 21-25).

However, Applicant respectfully submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, these references are completely unrelated, and no person of ordinary skill in the art would have considered combining these disparate references, absent impermissible hindsight.

In fact, Applicant submits that the Examiner can point to no motivation or suggestion in the references to urge the combination as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, neither of these references teach or suggest their combination.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been so motivated to combine the references as alleged by the Examiner. Therefore, the Examiner has failed to make a prima facie case of obviousness.

Moreover, Applicant submits that neither Vanderpool, nor Sheffield, nor Blinn, nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests "*a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on said search page by inputting at least one of: change-targeted item-name data*

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

13

for changing a search-item name in the item-name table; data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search-item name to the item-name table; display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table; and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table”, as recited, for example, in claim 1.

As noted above, these novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to make changes or additions to the search items on a search page (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

Clearly, these features are not taught or suggested by the Blinn. Indeed, Applicant would point out that nowhere does the Examiner allege that Blinn teaches or suggests a tool for changing search items displayed on a search page. Instead, the Examiner merely attempts to allege that Blinn discloses a method in which a web server generates HTML search pages.

The Examiner attempts to rely on Figure 12, and col. 1, lines 42-67 and col. 17, lines 18-41 in Blinn to support his position. However, nowhere does Figure 12 or these passages teach or suggest a customization tool for changing search items (e.g., search criteria) on a search page. Indeed, Figure 12 merely illustrates a data flow for the dynamic gate generator 125, database module 127 and the order processing module 129. That is, Figure 12 does not even teach or suggest a search page, let alone a tool for changing a search item on a search page. Therefore, Blinn clearly does not make up for the deficiencies of Vanderpool and Sheffield.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-19, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Serial No. 09/534,309
Docket No. 4-165US-FF
USH.010

14

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

7/26/05

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